

The number of licensed gun dealers in the state has dropped, from about 11,000 in the early 1990s to 2,498 as of earlier this month, and violent crime is down.

"We're doing more with less," Morrissey said. "I think we're doing better quality with less, too."

And a program started in the last two months in Detroit could reverse the downward trend. Operation Countdown hopes to use tough federal gun laws to take felons caught with guns off the streets.

#### REDUCTIONS DEBATED

Green and Morrissey disputed TRAC's numbers, but reports from other sources, including the ATF's national office in Washington, show a drop in prosecutions.

In March, U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., released figures showing federal gun prosecutions under one program dropped 46 percent between 1992 and 1998.

"The senator's message is: We've seen a reduction in violent crime rates overall," said his spokesman John Cox. "But not the reduction that we want. The effectiveness of federal prosecution of gun crimes has got to be utilized."

ATF's own national figures show the number of cases the bureau referred for prosecution to state and federal prosecutors dropped by about 48 percent from 1993-1997, said agent Jeff Roehm, chief of the public information division of the ATF in Washington. Numbers for 1998 show a slight increase.

Between 1993 and 1997, the median prison term for those convicted after investigation by the ATF stayed fairly constant at around 30 months, which suggests if agents were targeting more serious violators, they did not receive greater prison time.

"We gather the facts and present them to the U.S. Attorney for prosecution. It is up to the court to decide the sentence," Morrissey said. "And often times, the sentences fall under guidelines enacted by Congress."

While the number of people prosecuted declined in eastern Michigan, agents in the district referred more people for prosecution in 1997 than in any other federal district. The eastern district had a high number of referrals in 1993-1996 as well.

The Eastern District of Michigan covers the eastern half of the Lower Peninsula.

In the Western District of Michigan, which covers the rest of the state, the number of federal prosecutions fluctuated but the annual totals were much less than in the east.

If recent undercover investigations in Wayne County are an indication, finding illegal gun sales would not be difficult.

Between March 24 and April 14, undercover teams who told gun dealers they were juveniles and convicted felons bought weapons from nine out of 10 dealers.

Morrissey, who took over ATF Michigan operations last August, said his bureau can inspect gun dealers only once a year unless the bureau has probable cause to suspect a crime.

His figures show the number of cases referred to prosecutors by the ATF in Michigan have fluctuated between 1993 and 1997 but remained fairly constant. They do show, however, a downward trend in prosecutions.

In the early 1990s, when the numbers were higher, the bureau targeted more felons with guns, Morrissey said.

"Those are as easy as going out and picking blades of grass," he said.

But the number of guns on the street did not decline, Morrissey said. The ATF began concentrating on licensed and unlicensed dealers who supply guns illegally and violent felons. One dealer can supply guns used in many crimes, he said.

The ATF has 33 fewer agents on the streets of Michigan this year than it had in 1992, he

said. And some of those agents have more duties related to their specialized training in arson and explosives.

Some are assigned to state task forces, so the criminals they help arrest might not show up in the ATF's statistics, he said.

The ATF also assigns agents to gang reduction programs in schools, and the bureau investigates cigarette bootlegging, arson fires and explosions, not just gun violations.

#### IT WORKS IN RICHMOND

While the ATF has shifted its emphasis nationally away from individual felons with guns, one city that strictly enforced federal firearms laws saw a reduced murder rate.

In Richmond, federal prosecutors began in March 1997 to prosecute every gun case in the city of 200,000, said Jim Comey, executive assistant U.S. attorney. Officials advertise the tougher enforcement of Project Exile on billboards and television, Comey said.

"We have been selling deterrence the way they usually sell Wrangler jeans," he said.

It has worked, Comey said. Defendants ask lawyers to stop their cases from going "Exile." When cops pat down suspects on traffic stops, some say they are not stupid enough to carry a gun.

It has also helped change the murder rate. The city had 140 homicides in 1997 and 95 in 1998, he said. The number of firearm-related homicides dropped from 122 in 1997 to 78 in 1998.

Comey doesn't give Project Exile all the credit. Crack is waning in popularity; the state abolished parole three years ago, and drug enforcement has increased. He and others say it should not be seen as the answer for every city, although both gun-rights and gun-control advocates support it.

Local and federal officials in Detroit have joined to start a similar program. Operation Countdown, which began about two months ago, is operating in a few precincts. Already eight cases have been referred to federal prosecutors, said Bob Agacinski, deputy chief in charge of career criminals for the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office.

He said the program, which involves the ATF and Detroit police, has strong support from both Green and Wayne County Prosecutor John O'Hair.

"I think it's going better than we thought," Agacinski said.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO BURMA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 33

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 26, 1999.

#### REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO IRAN—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 34

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 26, 1999.

#### REPORT OF THE NOTICE OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO)—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 35

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is to continue in effect beyond May 30, 1999, and the emergency declared with respect to the situation in Kosovo is to continue in effect beyond June 9, 1999.

On December 27, 1995, I issued Presidential Determination 96-7, directing the Secretary of the Treasury, *inter*